

NEWS RELEASE

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For Immediate Release

ATTORNEY GENERAL ALBERTO GONZALES MEETS WITH PROSECUTORS AND AGENTS IN FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS

PRIORITIES INCLUDE TERRORISM,
PUBLIC CORRUPTION, METH AND
FIREARMS VIOLENCE

FAIRVIEW HEIGHTS, IL., JAN. 13 --

Attorney General Alberto Gonzales made a working visit to the U.S. Attorney's Office in Fairview Heights, IL, yesterday to meet with Federal prosecutors and Federal agents. In addition to meeting with United States Attorney Edward McNally, who hosted the discussions, he also led a working lunch with other senior prosecutors and supervisory Federal agents from the FBI, ATF, DEA and other agencies to address law enforcement priorities and challenges in the area. The Southern District of Illinois includes Madison, St. Clair, and a total of 38 counties in the southern part of the state. Those in attendance at the working lunch were Weysan Dun, Special Agent-in-Charge, Federal Bureau of Investigation; Andrew L. Traver, Special Agent-in-Charge, Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco, Firearms & Explosives; Donald Slazinik, United States Marshal; Jack Riley, Acting Special Agent-in-Charge, Drug Enforcement Administration; Timothy W. Viertel, Special Agent-in-Charge, United States Secret Service; B. Bernard Ferguson, Postal Inspector-in-Charge, United States Postal Inspection Service, Criminal Investigation; Byram W. Tichenor, Special Agent-in-Charge, Criminal Investigation Division; Internal Revenue Service; Dan Strong, Supervisory Special Agent,



Immigration & Customs Enforcement; Silas Irvin, Acting Warden, United States Bureau of Prisons, Marion, Illinois. The prosecutors in attendance, in addition to the U.S. Attorney, were Randy Massey, First Assistant, Norm Smith, Deputy Criminal Chief, Ranley Killian, OCDETF Chief, Richard Lloyd, General Crimes Chief, Thomas Leggans, Benton Chief, and Liam Coonan, Civil Chief.

The Attorney General also addressed a gathering of approximately 150 Justice Dept. prosecutors, agents and other employees who serve in Southern Illinois. He praised the office's recent success in pursuing public corruption, health care fraud, methamphetamine trafficking, firearms violence, and other initiatives in the area. "I'm here because your work in the Metro East and throughout Southern Illinois is important to me and to the President," he told the group. "You serve on the front lines, working to protect Illinois families and communities from those who would do them harm.."

He also spoke about September 11th, and emphasized that the most important priority of the President and the Department, here and throughout the country, was to protect Americans from terrorist attacks.

Prior to the Family Justice Center event, Gonzales also met with attorneys and federal law enforcement officials in St. Louis in the office of Catherine Hanaway, United States Attorney for the Eastern District of Missouri.